

المسألة الخامسة: جواز تعليق التعويد

The Fifth Issue: The Permissibility of Attaching [Qur'anic] Amulets ⁽¹⁾

By Imām Abu Abdillāh Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Anṣārī al-Qurṭubī رحمه الله [d. 671 AH]

Translated by Abu Humayd

Translator's preface

The following is a translation of an excerpt from Imām al-Qurṭubī's [d. 671 AH] Tafsīr⁽²⁾ of the Qur'ān relating to the permissibility of wearing Qur'ānic Ta'wīdh. Imām al-Qurṭubī sets out to answer some of the claims of those who unconditionally deem the usage of Ta'wīdh to be impermissible. In all, he deduces seven Masā'il (issues) regarding the following verse:

وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا

"We send down (stage by stage) in the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe: to the unjust it causes nothing but loss after loss." (Sūrat 'l-Isrā', 82)

Under the fifth Mas'alah al-Qurṭubī indicates - whilst utilising the above verse - towards the permissibility of Ta'wīdh, drawing upon evidences from the Qur'ān, Sunnah, Āthār (narrations), sayings of the Scholars and logic.

Fifth issue: [Imām] Mālik said:

'There is no harm in attaching texts that contain in them the names of Allāh - the Mighty and Majestic - upon the necks of the ill to attain blessings by it so long as the one who wears it does not intend by that to ward off the evil eye.'

So this [saying of Mālik] means, that before the evil eye occurs [one shouldn't attach it]. Of this opinion are the majority of the people of knowledge.

And all which is attached [as ta'wīdh] after an affliction in terms of Allāh's - the Mighty and Majestic - names and His book in the hope of [finding] relief and cure by Allāh - The High - is like the permitted form of ruqyah sanctioned by the Sunnah in [dealing with] the evil eye and it's like.

‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr said: The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

¹ A suitable title was given by the Translator.

² Al-Jāmi' li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān [10/288-289]

'When one of you becomes frightened during sleep, then let him say: 'I seek refuge in Allāh's Perfect Words from His anger, His punishment, the evil of the devils and that they should come'.

‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr used to teach this du'a to those of his children who could grasp it. Whereas for those of them that could not grasp it, he would write it and then hang it around their necks.

Hence if it is said, it was narrated from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ that he said:

'Whoever hangs something has entrusted [his care] to it'

And that Ibn Mas‘ūd had seen a tied amulet on his slave girl so he very strongly pulled it off then cut it and said:

'Verily the family of Ibn Mas‘ūd are free from shirk'. Thereafter he said: 'Verily amulets, incantations and ṭi'walah (charms) are shirk.' It was said: 'What are ṭi'walah'? He replied: 'That due to which a woman shows love to her husband.'

It was narrated from ‘Uqbah ibn ‘Āmir al-Juhanī that he said, I heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ say:

'Whoever attaches a tamīmah (amulets), may Allāh not fulfil his need, and whoever wears a sea-shell, may Allāh not give him peace.' Khalīl ibn Aḥmad said: 'Tamīmah is a pendant which has in it [verses of] protection, and sea-shell is beads.'

Abū ‘Umar (Ibn ‘Abd ‘l-Barr) said: 'Tamimah in the speech of the Arabs refers to a pendant, and its meaning according to the people of knowledge is: those pendants worn across necks for fear of the evil eye - or the like - striking, or that it does not occur before it comes to pass, may Allāh not grant him recovery and safety [from illness]. As for one who wears sea shells, which falls under the same meaning [as tamīmah], then meaning he has not entrusted to Allāh [his affairs], so may Allāh not grant him blessings in the state of well-being he finds himself in, and Allāh knows best.

So all of these (narrations mentioned above) was to caution against acts engaged in by the people of Jāhiliyyah (ignorance) like wearing amulets and pendants, and that they would consider these things to protect them and ward off calamity, and this is of course only done by Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic; He is the granter of ease and the one who tests [by inflicting illness], whom has no partner. Therefore, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ forbade them from such actions which they would carry out in their [period] of Jāhiliyyah.

It is narrated from ‘Ā'ishah that she said:

'That which is attached after affliction befalls is not considered to be among the [impermissible] amulets.'

Some of the people of knowledge disliked hanging amulets in all situations, [whether] before being afflicted with illness or even after it. The first position - permissible to wear - is most correct in light of narrations and speculation, Inshā-Allāh Ta‘ālā. As for what has been related from Ibn Mas'ud, then it is plausible he intended (by his dislike for its wearing) non-Quranic things obtained from fortune-tellers and soothsayers since seeking remedy from the quran, whether in attached form (amulet) or otherwise, is not shirk. His ﷺ saying: 'Whoever hangs something has entrusted (his care) to it'. So whoever attaches the Qu'rān (as an amulet) ought to be under the care of Allah and not be entrusted to others beside Him; because, it is He, Most High, who is ultimately sought

and upon Him reliance is placed when seeking cure through the Quran.

Ibn 'l-Musayyib was asked regarding ta'wīdh: 'Can it be attached'? He replied: 'If it is placed in a tube or garment then there is no harm in it if what was written in it is Qur'ān.'

[It is also narrated] from al-Dhaḥḥāk that he saw no harm in a man attaching something from the book of Allāh if he removed this at the time of sexual intercourse and during the call of nature. Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn 'Alī also allowed hanging ta'wīdh on children. Ibn Sīrīn used to see no harm in a person attaching something from the Qur'ān...